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Replacing an outside mirror on the S-Series

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Replacing an outside mirror on the S-Series

03-20-2006, 09:30 PM
 #1

David 93 SL2m
 Master Member

 Join Date: May 2000
 Location: North America
 Posts: 3,594
[David 93 SL2m's Photos](#)

Here is how I remove and replace the manual driver's side mirror on my 1993 SL2. The other Saturn S-Series are probably similar. The pictures were taken when I replaced the power window regulator in the driver's door of my 1993 SL2. Please post corrections or further details to this thread if they will help others. Thanks.

Tools needed

- Phillips screwdriver
- Flat blade screwdriver
- 2 or 2.5mm Allen wrench (a.k.a. Hex key)
- ¼ inch socket wrench
- ¼ inch drive 10mm deep socket or ¼ inch drive 4mm socket
- ¼ inch drive extension bar

Open the driver's door and optionally lower the window.

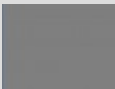


Partially pull away (downward) the weatherstripping along the top of the inside of the window that leads to the mirror.

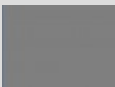
Remove the Phillips screw near the front on the mirror interior trim panel. On some of the newer S-Series there are two clips rather than a screw. Warning! The clips tend to become brittle and might crack when the plastic is cold. If possible do this during warm weather, in a garage, or after driving and warming up the inside of the car. Using a flat blade screwdriver carefully begin prying the mirror interior trim panel off at the top to release the upper clip. Then repeat the careful prying at the bottom to release the lower clip.



Begin pulling the inner trim panel for the mirror away from the door. It will not move much because the cable for adjusting the mirror is attached to the inner trim panel, maybe 1 or 2 inches.



To remove the inner trim panel, insert an Allen wrench into the little hole for the little set screw that connects the inner trim panel to the mirror's adjustment knob. The size is either 2mm or 2.5mm. Turn it a little bit until the adjustment knob and the inner trim panel separate. Don't unscrew it all the way - just enough so the two pieces come apart. Take the inner trim panel off.



Pull out the foam rubber wind-noise sound insulation. It will probably be two pieces. Make a mental picture of the

orientation of the foam rubber so that you can remember how to put it back afterward.

Now we will see the three special studs that are used to secure the mirror assembly to the outside of the door. A 4mm socket will fit on the ends of the studs, but look carefully because some of these studs actually have an integrated 10mm nut. (Mine don't have it but other S-Series might.) If the integrated nuts are present then use a 10mm deep socket to loosen and remove the three special studs. Otherwise use a 4mm socket on the ends of the studs. These should not be very tight and Locktite or the like is not used, so a ¼ inch socket wrench is sufficient. Don't let these special studs fall into the inside of the door! Loosen them slowly. Before removing these three special studs altogether, hold the outside of the mirror with your other hand - or have an assistant hold it for you. It will be loose and might fall off after the 3 special studs are out!

Pull the outer mirror away from the car door. The mirror is actually two parts. Don't worry if both of them come off the door. There will be a rubber gasket and perhaps foam weatherstripping with old adhesive present. You will have to guide the insulated cable for the adjustment knob through the opening from the inside toward the outside.

Some Saturn S-Series might have a power mirror on the driver's door and/or the passenger's door, so I am guessing there will be an electrical wire harness that will need to be released and later reconnected.

To install the replacement mirror, we basically follow the removal procedure in reverse. When tightening the 3 special studs and the little set screw that connects the inner trim panel, remember you are screwing into plastic so only tighten it enough to make everything snug. Chilton's says these are to be tightened 53 inch pounds or 6 Nm. If they are overtightened then they might crack the plastic! Chilton's also says the set screw should be tightened to 27 inch pounds or 3 Nm. This is very little force. Don't forget to reinstall the foam rubber insulation into the openings. Reposition the inner trim panel for the mirror. If it is the newer style then snap the clips back into place. If it is the older style then put back the Phillips screw, again using just enough force to keep the inner trim panel snug. Push back the weatherstripping along the top of the window on the inside that leads to the mirror. Remember to adjust the position of the outside mirror before driving!

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Current

• 2004 VUE 124K

• 2007 ION3 112K

...

Past

• 1993 SL2 212K

• 1993 SC2 140K

• 1996 SC2 157K

• 1996 SC2 126K

• 2001 SC2, 145K

• 2002 L200 20K

• 2002 SL1 129K

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REWARD EXCELLENCE!

Rate the quality of this post and help *David 93 SL2m* reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you!

quote

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03-31-2006, 11:20 AM

kanling

Member

Join Date: Sep 2005

Location: Baltimore, MD

Posts: 218

kanling's Photos

Re: Replacing an outside mirror on the S-Series

very nice post. how long does this take?

REWARD EXCELLENCE!

Rate the quality of this post and help *kanling* reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you!

#2

www.saturnfans.com/forums/showthread.php?t=73282

2/7

1994 SL	
  	
03-31-2006, 02:17 PM #3	
David 93 SL2m Master Member  Join Date: May 2000 Location: North America Posts: 3,594 David 93 SL2m's Photos  2004 VUE 2.2L 2007 ION-3 Sedan	Re: Replacing an outside mirror on the S-Series It takes maybe 10 or 15 minutes to take the mirror off and put the mirror on again. The first time we do something it takes us a long time, but after that we can do it more quickly. The famous learning curve! ... Current · 2004 VUE 124K · 2007 ION3 112K ... Past · 1993 SL2 212K · 1993 SC2 140K · 1996 SC2 157K · 1996 SC2 126K · 2001 SC2, 145K · 2002 L200 20K · 2002 SL1 129K ... REWARD EXCELLENCE!  Rate the quality of this post and help <i>David 93 SL2m</i> reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you!
  	
03-31-2006, 03:22 PM #4	
Matt95SL1 Member  Join Date: Jul 2002 Location: Portland, OR Posts: 95 Matt95SL1's Photos  1995 SL1	Re: Replacing an outside mirror on the S-Series Great write-up David, I finally got around to putting the mirror on today and your write-up walked me right through it. Took me about 20 minutes to swap out the mirror. The only issue I'm having now is that my mirror adjustment doesn't allow me to pull the mirror far enough inward. I have to lean over to my left a little to see out of it. I can physically push the mirror in to the correct spot but it won't stay there. Any ideas? REWARD EXCELLENCE!  Rate the quality of this post and help <i>Matt95SL1</i> reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you!
  	
04-01-2006, 01:52 PM #5	
David 93 SL2m Master Member  Join Date: May 2000 Location: North America Posts: 3,594 David 93 SL2m's Photos  2004 VUE 2.2L 2007 ION-3 Sedan	Re: Replacing an outside mirror on the S-Series I didn't have any issues with the adjustment of your mirror while it was temporarily on my car. I'm just over 6 feet tall so I keep the seat all the way back, the inside mirror "raised" so I can see under it, and the outside mirrors angled a bit away from the car so I didn't experience the adjustment issue you wrote about. Maybe something is binding at least one of the adjustment cables? Maybe the cables need some sort of lubrication? These are just guesses. I'd have to take my mirror off and look carefully at how the cables work for adjusting the mirror. Maybe somebody else has ideas for the mirror adjustment cables? ... Current · 2004 VUE 124K · 2007 ION3 112K ... Past · 1993 SL2 212K · 1993 SC2 140K · 1996 SC2 157K · 1996 SC2 126K · 2001 SC2, 145K · 2002 L200 20K · 2002 SL1 129K ... REWARD EXCELLENCE!  Rate the quality of this post and help <i>David 93 SL2m</i> reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you!
  	
04-02-2006, 06:52 AM #6	
Matt95SL1 Member  Join Date: Jul 2002	Re: Replacing an outside mirror on the S-Series I'll take a look at the adjustment cables, like I said before I can push the mirror where I want it to be with my hand but it doesn't want to stay there. Not really a big deal either way as I can live with it in it's current state. Thanks again for all

Location: Portland, OR
Posts: 95

[Matt95SL1's Photos](#) 

1995 SL1



the help.

REWARD EXCELLENCE!



Rate the quality of this post and help *Matt95SL1* reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you!



04-02-2006, 09:30 AM

#2

David 93 SL2m

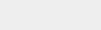
Master Member



Join Date: May 2000
Location: North America
Posts: 3,594

[David 93 SL2m's Photos](#) 

2004 VUE 2.2L
2007 ION-3 Sedan



Re: Replacing an outside mirror on the S-Series

This sounds like a small but annoying problem, sort of like when I did a test drive on a new Pontiac Grand Prix GTP in the late 1990s. I liked everything about the car - wet windshield wipers for the washer system, hydraulic struts for the hood and for the trunk, antenna integrated into rear window, comfortable seats, powerful supercharged 3.8 V6 engine, etc. - but the whole time during my test drive the shoulder strap was **sawing** my neck. Pass!

My guess is there is a simple fix so I created a thread for this over in the S-Series area so others can give advice:

<http://www.saturnfans.com/forums/showthread.php?t=74179>

...

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...

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- 1996 SC2 157K
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- 2001 SC2, 145K
- 2002 L200 20K
- 2002 SL1 129K

...

REWARD EXCELLENCE!



Rate the quality of this post and help *David 93 SL2m* reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you!



12-06-2006, 07:35 PM

#8

tunasashimi

New Member



Join Date: Dec 2006
Posts: 1

Re: Replacing an outside mirror on the S-Series

David, thank you so much for this write-up. My Saturn got hit a few weeks ago; it looked like my mirror was hanging by a thread after that. Duct tape did the trick temporarily but I decided to buy a replacement mirror from AutoPartsWarehouse.com (the purchase and delivery were hassle-free).

I went through your instructions, bought the necessary tools and replaced my mirror easily. I have a '95 Saturn SL1 and the 3 studs had 10mm nuts. (It turns out I didn't need the 4mm socket after all, just the 10mm deep socket.) One of the nuts fell into the inside of the door, though, so I only secured the remaining 2. I don't know if that will cause any problems. I suppose getting the one that fell might be a difficult task, but if anyone has any ideas about this, I'm all ears.

Now my Saturn looks like its normal self again, save for the scratches on my door and duct tape residue on my glass.

Once again, thank you so much, David, you're heaven-sent!

REWARD EXCELLENCE!



Rate the quality of this post and help *tunasashimi* reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you!



12-07-2006, 10:49 PM

#9

David 93 SL2m

Master Member



Join Date: May 2000
Location: North America
Posts: 3,594

[David 93 SL2m's Photos](#) 

2004 VUE 2.2L
2007 ION-3 Sedan

Re: Replacing an outside mirror on the S-Series

Quote:

Originally Posted by [tunasashimi](#) 

David, thank you so much for this write-up. My Saturn got hit a few weeks ago; it looked like my mirror was hanging by a thread after that. Duct tape did the trick temporarily but I decided to buy a replacement mirror from AutoPartsWarehouse.com (the purchase and delivery were hassle-free).

No problem. Your mirror was probably dangling by the adjustment cable. As you found out, duct tape is only a temporary solution - it won't last long at highway speeds.

Quote:

Originally Posted by [tunasashimi](#) 

One of the nuts fell into the inside of the door, though, so I only secured the remaining 2. I don't know if that will cause any problems. I suppose getting the one that fell might be a difficult task, but if anyone has any ideas about this, I'm all ears.

In my opinion we should use all 3 nuts to hold the mirror securely.

I'd only try to rescue the lost nut if it started to bang around and make funny noises. The nut that fell into the door can probably be removed by partially loosening the outer door panel, but getting it out can be more of a hassle than simply getting an extra nut from the parts counter at a Saturn dealership - or perhaps from a car junkyard.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **tunasashimi** 
Now my Saturn looks like its normal self again, save for the scratches on my door and duct tape residue on my glass.

The duct tape reside will probably come off the glass if it is cleaned with some sort of scouring powder that we use to clean the kitchen and bathrooms. My favorite for cleaning the exterior car glass is a powder called Bon Ami. It is only about \$1 per can. Try sprinkling some cleanser on a wet sponge, cleaning the glass where the duct tape residue is located, and rinsing with water. It might take a few attempts but this should get the glass cleaner than ever.

Quote:

Originally Posted by **tunasashimi** 
Once again, thank you so much, David, you're heaven-sent!

No problem. There is lots of incredible information here at SaturnFans posted by many great people. For starters, scan the other things found here in the "How-To Library"....!

...

Current

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• 2007 ION3 112K

...

Past

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• 1993 SC2 140K

• 1996 SC2 157K

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• 2002 L200 20K

• 2002 SL1 129K

...

REWARD EXCELLENCE!

 Rate the quality of this post and help *David 93 SL2m* reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you!





11-16-2010, 10:16 PM

#10

Last Saturn

New Member

Join Date: Oct 2009

Posts: 3



**Re: Replacing an outside mirror on the S-Series**

Excellent directions! Replaced left outside mirror of 1995 SW1 in less than 15 minutes... after removing the trim panel twice to determine appropriate tools.

As "tunasashimi" found for '95 SL1, the mirror on the SW1 is held on by 10 mm nuts with attached washers screwed on the special studs. So no need to unscrew the special studs from the mirror assembly.

To eliminate risk of dropping a nut inside the door— after removing the foam rubber sound insulation, I stuffed paper toweling into the crack in the door frame under the nuts/studs, and then for added insurance placed a layer of duct tape on top..

On the 1995 SW1 the appropriate size of the Allen wrench to loosen the set screw in the mirror adjustment knob mounting is 2 mm.

REWARD EXCELLENCE!

 Rate the quality of this post and help *Last Saturn* reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you!





01-08-2011, 01:26 PM

#11

ManiXSC2

Junior Member

Join Date: Aug 2006

Location: Concord NH

Posts: 47



ManiXSC2's Photos 

**Re: Replacing an outside mirror on the S-Series**

hey? Basically the same directions for an 01 SL2? Gotta find a cheap mirror and get this done, I'm and idiot and managed to push my car into the side garage wall and shattered the mirror, yay for cold plastic

REWARD EXCELLENCE!

 Rate the quality of this post and help *ManiXSC2* reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you!





www.saturnfans.com/forums/showthread.php?t=73282

5/7

2001 SL2	
	
04-28-2011, 04:07 AM #12	
keithreed Junior Member Join Date: Apr 2011 Posts: 14	Re: Replacing an outside mirror on the S-Series Wow! Thanks! REWARD EXCELLENCE!  Rate the quality of this post and help <i>keithreed</i> reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you! 
04-10-2014, 05:18 PM #13	
crapgame New Member Join Date: Apr 2014 Posts: 1	Re: Replacing an outside mirror on the S-Series Every looks as you said except one thing. The set screw holding in the inner plate on my 94 SL does not take an allen wrench. It's an inside thread set screw. What kind of tool do I need for it? REWARD EXCELLENCE!  Rate the quality of this post and help <i>crapgame</i> reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you! 
08-23-2014, 09:43 AM #14	
bobbyrae Member Join Date: Oct 2005 Location: Alameda, CA Posts: 445 bobbyrae's Photos  1993 SL2	Re: Replacing an outside mirror on the S-Series Quote: Originally Posted by crapgame  <i>Every looks as you said except one thing. The set screw holding in the inner plate on my 94 SL does not take an allen wrench. It's an inside thread set screw. What kind of tool do I need for it?</i> I have a 93 SL2 and would bet that yours is exactly like mine. The set screw was so small and so far down in there, and with some debris in the way, I didn't even see it, having thoughts like yours. My eyes aren't that good, so I had to look with a magnifier. Get it clean and then use a 2mm allen wrench. I'm sure that's it! ... Bobby Rae Alameda, CA 1993 SL2 A/T, 80k miles, 22/33/43 mpg 1982 Accord 5-speed, 303k miles, 23/32/40 mpg REWARD EXCELLENCE!  Rate the quality of this post and help <i>bobbyrae</i> reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you! 
08-23-2014, 09:54 AM #15	
bobbyrae Member Join Date: Oct 2005 Location: Alameda, CA Posts: 445 bobbyrae's Photos  1993 SL2	Re: Replacing an outside mirror on the S-Series This is indeed a very good write-up and I am sure many will benefit from it. I have done my '93 SL2 mirrors a few times now because the plastic was cracked and I had to get them apart to apply the super glue! The one difference I found is that you HAVE to remove those 10mm nuts to remove the mirrors from the car, but then to get the two pieces apart, you have to remove the studs. Not having a 4mm socket and also thinking that the ends of these studs are more like torx anyway, I just took two of the 10mm nuts and wedged them together on one stud at a time so I could unscrew it. And they were very tight! It was 15-20 ft-lbs of effort until they were almost fully removed. So I wouldn't even think about using a 1/4" drive socket. ... Bobby Rae Alameda, CA 1993 SL2 A/T, 80k miles, 22/33/43 mpg 1982 Accord 5-speed, 303k miles, 23/32/40 mpg REWARD EXCELLENCE!  Rate the quality of this post and help <i>bobbyrae</i> reputation points. Click the reputation button near the bottom left corner of this message box. Thank you! 

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